

**Memorandum of the Meeting  
 Regular Study Session/Meeting  
 Twenty-Seventh Town Council of Highland  
 Monday, July 20, 2015**

The regular study session of the Twenty-Seventh Town Council of the Town of Highland was convened at the regular place, the Highland Municipal, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana, in the plenary meeting chambers on **Monday, July 20, 2015** at the time of 7:01 o'clock p.m.

**Silent Roll Call:** Councilors Mark A. Herak, Dan Vassar and Konnie Kuiper were present. Councilor Steve Wagner was absent owing to an extended work commitment. Councilor Bernie Zemen was absent owing to a family health matter. A quorum was attained. The Clerk-Treasurer Michael W. Griffin was present to memorialize the proceedings.

*Also present:* Randy Bowman, Assistant Inspector for Electrical; Susan Murovic, Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals; Peter Hojnicky, Metropolitan Police Chief; and Cecile Petro, Redevelopment Director were present.

*Additionally Present:* Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, Attorney for Webb Hyundai; and Richard Underkofler, Secretary of the Highland Community Foundation were also present.

**General Substance of Matters Discussed or Proposed**

1. *Discussion regarding Police Chief's request to provide another general wage increase for the position Support Services Staff.* The Police Chief advocated for additional pay increases to the positions in his staff styled generally under the rubric of Support Services Staff, according to an increase in wages and was recently instituted for most of the other full-time employees in the workforce.

It was noted that the 2015 wage increase design authorizes a general increase to be effective January 4 of 2.25% and a second general increase of 2.25% beginning in the pay period beginning June 21, 2015, rendering a nominal 4.5%. This would apply to all full-time workers and the Special Patrol Officer 1 position in the Metropolitan Police Department, which is used for the sole basis to calculate the police pensions. It was further noted that at the December 15, 2014 study session, there was an understanding that the positions to which the Police Chief referred were experiencing their increases and would not be subject to the general increase. This was due to the understanding that the increases over the predecessor positions of *Records Clerks* effectively were 16% and 21% depending upon the position succeeded. It was still further noted that since the department was promoting the existing workers, the Chief would be authorized to bring all the newly appointed persons in at the incumbent rate rather than the lower starting rate for each position. The positions and rates of pay are as follows:

		<b>Starting Rate</b>	<b>Incumbent Rate</b>
<i>*Starting rate shall apply to any person with less than 1-year experience in the position.*</i>			
*Lead Support Services Clerk	( 1 )	\$15.32	\$16.32 (21% over record clerk)
*Lead Support Services Training Coordinator	( 1 )	\$15.32	\$16.32 (21% over record clerk)
* Support Services Clerk	( 1 )	\$14.32	\$15.32 (16% over record clerk)
Support Services Clerk	(part-time)	\$14.32	\$15.32

**For initial appointments, the appointing authority may start employees at the incumbent rate. All subsequent appointments shall be subject to the starting rate.**

* Police Records Clerk	( 2 )	\$ 13.44	\$ 13.44 per hr.
Police Records Clerk	(part-time)	\$ 13.44	\$ 13.44 hr.

The Metropolitan Chief suggested that these pay changes offered to the newly created positions were in part done to correct for historic underpayment. He also asked that any increase apply to part-time workers. He also suggested that he would be saving by the lowering of full-time workers leaving some budgetary discretion where insurance was budgeted for more workers. He further noted that in some cases, the positions were taken by Radio Operators, meaning that they took a cut in pay from those positions. It is noted that Radio Operators were losing their jobs owing to the assumption of dispatching duties by the county consolidated Communications and Public Safety Access Point. The Chief represented his belief that he could cover the increases in the current budget.

It was still further noted that there was an evaluation currently underway in the Office of the Clerk-Treasurer regarding the sufficiency of the current appropriations for departments for the raises that were finally approved in the current year 2015. No actions were taken, until the review was completed.

The discussion turned to increases applying to part-time workers. It was noted that that generally it did not, but that Fire Fighters, part-time workers, were granted the increases and the Secretary (part-time) for the Redevelopment Department also received the increase. It was further noted that the Electrical Inspector had not received an increase in a significant period.

2. *Discuss the Webb Hyundai rezoning Request Favorably Certified by the Plan Commission.* The Town Council and Attorney Thomas O'Donnell discussed the favorably recommended rezoning site at 2330-41<sup>st</sup> Street, Highland. It was noted that the rezoning was sought to permit the lot to be available for additional retail inventory.

Mr. O'Donnell reviewed the site plans and the intended landscaping and improvements consented to by the petitioner in order to address the concerns of remonstrators. Mr. O'Donnell characterized the concerns as being centered on noise and light pollution. He further suggested that the improvements provided including landscaping and the types of lighting that will be used, seemed to satisfy the concerns of the remonstrators and the Plan Commission.

3. *Discussion of the development of south end of town into a light industrial area, south of the railroad tracks and north of main street, east of Kennedy, west of the railroad tracks.* The Redevelopment Director presented an initiative of the Redevelopment Commission to establish an upscale Industrial Park as described in the heading. The Redevelopment Director identified the area as encompassing 58 acres, estimating significant potential for increased tax base over the current value.

The Redevelopment Director issued a fact sheet and a report from Cender and Company commissioned by the Redevelopment Department to explore the proposal. The fact sheet reported that the area currently has an assessed valuation of \$1,811,500, generating \$49, 461.20 in property taxes. It was suggested that at the end of 20 years, the area could be increased to an assessed valuation of \$42,649,392, which if the current tax rates were in place then, would rendered \$1,164,499 in property taxes.

The Redevelopment Director sought initial impressions of the Town Councilors and solicited whether there would be any objection to the Redevelopment

Commission taking a further step to evaluate the plan by commissioning an engineering study of the proposed site.

There was no objection shared by any member of the Town Council.

4. *Discussion with Richard Underkofler, Highland Community Foundation, Grant Application from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Chi Cal River Fund RFP for a two-year project to perform Tree inventory and Planting Project.* This will require a local match. Richard Underkofler presented his desire to file an application as described in the caption, in order to provide for a single tree inventory town wide and to plant new trees in support of improved aesthetics, as well as greater natural storm water shed management. He further noted that there currently is a great deal of fragmentation in the current collection of this data by the Town, with the Redevelopment, Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments each using their own approach.

Mr. Underkofler represented that the grant would allow for an arborist, now hired by the Parks and Recreation Department to work with an arbor advisory board to manage this process. He further noted that he was on a deadline for filing the grant application. He presented a matrix that described a program totaling \$152,040, with the grant supporting \$60,000 and the balance, \$92,040, to come from local sources.

During the discussion, councilors expressed resistance to local cost. While no formal commitment to the local share was attained, there was expressed no objection to filing the application, with the local share as described. It was noted that if an award were granted, the Town Council would revisit the issue.

Mr. Underkofler also offered a survey on the progress of the development of the park at the intersection of 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Fifth Street, noting the sculpture would soon be installed.

5. *Discuss the Midwestern Service Agreement related to the Pedestrian Countdown Signal Inserts in the amount of \$19,120.* The Town Council discussed its earlier determination that this project would come from the CEDIT Fund, instead of the Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund, as initially requested by the Public Works Director. The Clerk-Treasurer indicated that the Town Council President could revise the Capital Improvement Plan associated with the Fund, and then the matter could proceed as described. It was further discussed that a revision would include the lighted street signs as had been suggested by the Town Council President earlier, all of which would come from the amount currently identified for the resurfacing of streets. It was noted that the resurfacing was being financed by the currently pending Public Works Promissory Note of 2015.
6. *Discuss the ABZA Petition on Use Variance Request for Daycare at 8407 Parrish Place, currently zoned as R-1 Single Family Residential District.* This received an unfavorable recommendation from the ABZA. The Town Council reviewed the report and findings of facts as submitted by the Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals regarding the petitioner's request for a use variance to operate a daycare in her home. There was no objection to take the matter up at the Plenary Business meeting July 27, 2015.
7. *Discuss the forthcoming Shared Ethics Advisory Commission Ethics Survey methods and determine which is most suitable for our workers as to allow the greatest response rates.* The Town Council reviewed the several methods for surveying the workers for the forthcoming employee survey to be conducted by the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission to gather new data regarding the effectiveness of

current programming and training. After reviewing the methods, it was determined by the Town Council that distributing Scantron cards with return envelope would be most favored for the Town. This would be communicated to the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission by the Clerk-Treasurer.

8. *Discuss the COMCAST 36 Month Internet Services agreement for the Police Station.* This is for the new police station. The Town Council reviewed the proposed agreement for installation and monthly service for special dedicated line to support the Internet needs of the Police Department at the new location of 3315 Ridge Road. It was noted that the two conduits that were included in the construction of the new facility that would have accommodated the installation and been owned by the Town, was removed from the final construction plan. It was noted the one-time installation cost is \$1,500. There would also be monthly service charges of \$317.80 for the life of the agreement. There was no objection to placing this on the agenda of the plenary business meeting of July 27, 2015.
9. *Police Officer Hiring from 37 to 39.* The Town Council discussed with the Police Chief the status of force strength. It was noted that Sergeant Towasnicki, who was enrolled in the delayed retirement option program, would be at his retirement date in July 2016. While budgeting for staffing at a level of 38 generally, the Town Council President discussed whether there would be any objection for the department to proceed to hire two rather one officer, in anticipation of the known retirement of Sergeant Towasnicki. There was support for the approach.
10. *Discussion of reorganization of public works department (agency).* Presently it is really three departments, Streets, Water (See I.C 8-1.5-4) and Public Sanitation (See IC 36-9-25 et seq.). The Town Council President and the Clerk-Treasurer discussed the desire to evaluate the current structure of the Public Works Department, which is really an agency, managing three departments, comprised of those described above. The Town Council President, utilizing H.R. Unlimited for consultation, would like to proceed with a study that could revisit the organizational framework and make a recommendation that would bring the structure into greater compliance with current enabling law and perhaps optimize outcomes.

It was noted that when the Town Council adopted the statutes above by ordinance, there was established a Department of Waterworks and a Department of Public Sanitation, placing the responsibility for operating those utilities under the structure provided by those enabling laws. Further, there is an "effective street department", but not one formally established by ordinance. The position of Public Works Director was established by ordinance in 1970 originally, and has assumed the supervisory role over three departments and answers to three governing bodies, one of which is the Town Council, which presents organizational stresses that are unusual and can be in some cases barriers to ease of administration. There was no objection offered to moving forward with study and leading to a recommendation.

There being no further business necessary or desired to be discussed by the Town Council, the regular study session of the Town Council of **Monday, July 20, 2015**, was adjourned at 8:40 o'clock p.m.

Michael W. Griffin, IAMC/MMC/CPFA/CPFIM/CMO  
Clerk-Treasurer